

**DRAFT Data Assessment Team (DAT) Conference Call Notes**  
**1/3/13 at 11:00 a.m.**

Participants: Lucinda Shih (CCWD), Geir Aasen and Julio Adib-Samii (DFW [Department of Fish and Wildlife], previously known as DFG), Edmund Yu, Elaine Jeu, Loi Tran and Norman Lee (DWR), Bill Poytress, Craig Anderson, Jon Speegle and Leigh Bartoo (FWS), Elizabeth Leeper (KMTG), Owen Lu (MWD), Barb Byrne (NMFS), Doug Obegi (NRDC), Tom Boardman (SLDMWA)

**Sacramento River Salmonid Monitoring**

There was no new biweekly salmonid passage data from the Red Bluff Diversion Dam to report since 12/15. However, Bill Poytress (FWS) mentioned that a new biweekly report will be sent out soon and that the delay was due to the recent holiday. In absence of a new biweekly report, Poytress provided a brief update on current passage trends at the Red Bluff Diversion Dam. Based on preliminary passage data, smolt out migration has subsided quite a bit, and there has been a huge uptake in fall-run Chinook salmon passage. Currently, there are several thousand fall-run Chinook salmon sampled per day and this is considered somewhat high for this time of year. The new biweekly salmonid passage report for the Red Bluff Diversion Dam will be posted at [http://www.fws.gov/redbluff/rbdd\\_biweekly.aspx](http://www.fws.gov/redbluff/rbdd_biweekly.aspx).

Lastly, the rotary screw traps at Tisdale Weir and Knights Landing are still inactive. Graphical summaries of monitoring data at the Sacramento River and at other locations can be found at <http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/calfed/calfedmonitoring.cfm>.

**Hatchery Release Update**

The Coleman National Fish Hatchery will release approximately 667,000 hatchery steelhead into the Sacramento River at Bend Bridge between 1/2 and 1/9. This release group is 100% marked with no coded wire tag and has an estimated average fork length of 195 mm.

Poytress mentioned that hatchery steelhead were observed at the Red Bluff Diversion Dam, but these observations will not be in the biweekly reports for the Red Bluff Diversion Dam.

**Delta Fish Monitoring**

Preliminary FWS Trawl and Seine Catch Report from 12/23/12 to 12/29/12				
Species*	Beach Seines	Mossdale Trawl	Sacramento Trawl	Chippis Isand Trawl
Wild CHNF	104		21	
Wild CHNLF	3			2
Wild CHNW	30			1
Wild CHNS	26			
Hatchery CHN	9			6
Wild SH				
Hatchery SH				
DSM				9 (67 to 77 mm, no expression)
LFS				89 (104 to 132 mm, 31 with milt, 28 with eggs, 30 no expression)
SPLT	2			7
*Chinook race based on length (Frank Fisher model); CHNF=Fall run, CHNLF=Late-fall run, CHNW=Winter run, CHNS= Spring run, SH = Steelhead, DSM=Delta smelt, LFS=Longfin smelt, SPLT = Splittail; adipose fin clip indicates hatchery stock; non-adipose fin clip indicates wild origin.				

The Delta fish monitoring data from FWS are also posted online at <http://www.fws.gov/stockton/jfmp/datamanagement.asp>.

### Salvage Monitoring

Preliminary DFG Salvage Report for Salmonids from 12/24/12 to 12/30/12								
Species	Central Valley Project (CVP)				State Water Project (SWP)			
	Adipose Clipped (Hatchery)		Non-Adipose Clipped (Wild)		Adipose Clipped (Hatchery)		Non-Adipose Clipped (Wild)	
	Salvage	Loss	Salvage	Loss	Salvage	Loss	Salvage	Loss
CHNF								
<b>Total to Date</b>	85	55	9	6	322	1460	10	46
CHNLF	11	10			22	99		
<b>Total to Date</b>	154	109	28	18	602	2712	53	240
CHNW								
<b>Total to Date</b>	10	6	20	14	51	230	50	225
CHNS								
<b>Total to Date</b>								
CHNU			8	5				
<b>Total to Date</b>								
SH			8	5			8	35
<b>Total to Date</b>			13	9			16	69
Notes: -Chinook race based on length (Delta model); CHNF=Fall run, CHNLF=Late-fall run, CHNW=Winter run, CHNS= Spring run, CHNU= Unknown race (Chinook larger than the length at date criteria), SH = Steelhead. -Salvage and loss estimates are rounded to the nearest whole fish. -Documentation of how to calculate salvage and Chinook loss can be found at <a href="ftp://ftp.delta.dfg.ca.gov/salvage/Salmon%20Loss%20Estimation/">ftp://ftp.delta.dfg.ca.gov/salvage/Salmon%20Loss%20Estimation/</a> . -Steelhead loss: SWP steelhead loss = salvage x 4.33 and CVP steelhead loss = salvage x 0.68. -Total to date is the total since 10/1/12 (the start of water year 2013).								

Preliminary DFG Salvage Report for Smelt and Other Species from 12/24/12 to 12/30/12				
Species	CVP		SWP	
	Salvage	Total to Date	Salvage	Total to Date
DSM	8	36		46
LFS				
SPLT		9		41
GST				
WST		4		
Notes: -DSM=Delta smelt, LFS=Longfin smelt, SPLT = Splittail, GST=Green sturgeon, WST=White sturgeon. -Salvage estimates are rounded to the nearest whole fish. -Total to date is the total since 10/1/12 (the start of water year 2013).				

Since the reporting period and up to 1/2/13, four delta smelt were salvaged on 12/31/12 and four delta smelt were salvaged on 1/2/13. In addition, four white sturgeon were salvaged on 1/1/13 at the SWP fish facility.

There were concerns on whether the white sturgeon were properly identified since the fish facility operators had misidentified green and white sturgeon in the past. To address this, Geir Aasen (DFW) described some of the sturgeon protocols at the CVP fish facility. Currently, all sturgeon observed by a

CVP operator are held temporarily for verification by a CVP biologist. Afterwards, the CVP biologist would collect a tissue sample for the sturgeon and archive the tissue sample for DNA analysis. However, Aasen was not as familiar with the protocols at the SWP fish facility. After the DAT call, Kevin Reece (DWR) mentioned that SWP operators currently do not collect sturgeon tissue samples since they are not permitted to do so. However, Reece is currently working on obtaining a permit for the operators to collect sturgeon tissue samples. Nevertheless, SWP operators do seek verification from a SWP biologist if the sturgeon observed is less than 200 mm.

Salvage information is posted on the salvage FTP site (<ftp://ftp.dfg.ca.gov/salvage/>). If you cannot access the FTP site, you can also go to <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/delta/apps/salvage/Default.aspx> and click on "Salvage FTP Site."

### **Smelt Monitoring**

DFW had no new data to report since the 2012 Fall Midwater Trawl results were presented at a prior DAT conference call. As a reminder, the Smelt Larva Survey #1 started yesterday (1/2) and the survey will be completed by the end of today. Results should be available by the next DAT conference call. For more information about the Smelt Larva Survey, please visit the DFW website: <http://dfg.ca.gov/delta/projects.asp?ProjectID=SLS>.

In addition, Spring Kodiak Trawl #1 is scheduled for next week from 1/7 to 1/10. Results should be available during the week of 1/14. For more information about the Spring Kodiak Trawl, please visit the DFW website: <http://dfg.ca.gov/delta/projects.asp?ProjectID=SKT>.

### **Smelt Working Group**

A FWS representative from the Smelt Working Group was not present on the DAT conference call at the time of the Smelt Working Group discussion. To provide some background to DAT, Edmund Yu (DWR) presented the Smelt Working Group's meeting summary from the Smelt Working Group's 12/31 meeting notes that are available online and presented at other conference calls this week:

The Working Group recommended that OMR flow for the start of Action 2 should be set at a 14-day average flow of no more negative than -2,000 cfs with a corresponding 5-day average flow of no more negative than -2,500 cfs. Should the Projects experience no salvage for four consecutive days or no salvage for five out of seven days, the Working Group will meet again to discuss the potential to set OMR flow at -3,500 cfs. Implementation of Action 2 will begin January 2, 2013, which follows immediately upon the end of Action 1. The Working Group will continue to monitor salvage, turbidity, and other conditions, and will reconvene Monday, January 7.

After reviewing the 12/31 meeting summary, there were questions about the -3,500 cfs OMR (Old and Middle River) off ramp based on salvage. Leigh Bartoo, the FWS representative from the Smelt Working Group, was able to join the DAT conference call later on in the discussion. Bartoo clarified that FWS did not carry the salvage criteria from Smelt Working Group's recommendation into the 12/31 determination. FWS determined that the 14-day average OMR flow should be no more negative than -2,000 cfs as described above, but did not base the OMR off ramp of -3,500 cfs on the salvage criteria as recommended by the Smelt Working Group. Instead, the FWS determination from 12/31 would allow OMR to be managed at -3,500 cfs as early as 1/3, which would be contingent on the approval of an acceptable adaptive management plan. The FWS determination from 12/31 was not yet available online at the time of the DAT conference call due to technical difficulties.

In addition, there was a question about the duration for the OMR restriction of -2,000 cfs. Bartoo clarified that recommending an OMR range is a weekly process and this will reset itself on the following Monday (1/7) when the Smelt Working Group meets again.

Lastly, there was a question on what the adaptive management plan will entail that will allow OMR to be managed at -3,500 cfs. Bartoo did not have an update at the time since the discussions have been geared towards upper management. However, Bartoo will follow up with FWS management on the adaptive management discussion. After the DAT call, Bartoo provided an e-mail update and suggested

viewing the full text of the FWS determination from 12/31 to get the best information on the adaptive management discussion. Since the determination was not yet available online, Bartoo attached a copy of the determination in the e-mail update.

The Smelt Working Group notes and the FWS determination from 12/31 will be posted at [http://www.fws.gov/sfbaydelta/cvp-swp/smelt\\_working\\_group.cfm](http://www.fws.gov/sfbaydelta/cvp-swp/smelt_working_group.cfm).

### **Delta Operations for Salmonids and Sturgeon (DOSS) Working Group**

DOSS had its most recent meeting yesterday (1/2) morning and discussed the preliminary estimate of the juvenile production estimate (JPE) of winter-run Chinook salmon that will enter the Delta this 2012/2013 outmigration year. Adult escapement was higher this year and the preliminary JPE estimate was almost three times greater than what it was last year. Based on the JPE estimate, about 535,325 winter-run Chinook salmon will enter the Delta in 2012/2013. However, this estimate is preliminary and might be adjusted slightly when NMFS finalizes the JPE in late January.

The JPE is used to calculate incidental take for wild winter-run Chinook salmon. The incidental take limit as described in the 2009 NMFS BiOp is 2% of the JPE. For 2012/2013, the preliminary incidental take limit is 10,706 for the natural production of winter-run Chinook salmon entering the Delta.

In terms of the RPAs, NMFS RPA Action IV.3 ("Reduce Likelihood of Entrainment or Salvage at the Export Facilities") ended at the end of year. As of 1/1, NMFS RPA Action IV.2.3 ("Old and Middle River Flow Management") will be in effect until 6/15 or until the water temperature off ramp is met. As a reminder, NMFS RPA Action IV.2.3 calls for the 14-day OMR average to be no more negative than -5,000 cfs throughout the action with the potential of OMR going in a more positive direction (i.e., -2,500 cfs or -3,500 cfs) if a fish trigger is exceeded. For more details on NMFS RPA Action IV.2.3, please refer to [page 74 of the 2009 NMFS BiOp RPA with 2011 amendments](#). In general, there are two different stage triggers and four different criteria for each stage trigger. An overview of the different criteria and what they entail are briefly described below:

1. The first criterion is the daily JPE based older juvenile Chinook salmon loss density trigger. The first stage trigger for this criterion is tripped when the wild older juvenile Chinook loss density is greater than 2% of the JPE/2000, which comes out to 5.35 fish/TAF. The second stage trigger for this criterion is tripped when the wild older juvenile loss density is greater than 2% of the JPE/1000, which comes out to 10.71 fish/TAF.
2. The second criterion is also based on the daily wild older juvenile Chinook salmon loss density, but not based on the JPE threshold. For the second criterion, the first stage trigger is based on 8 fish/TAF and the second stage trigger is based on 12 fish/TAF. For this year, criterion #1 (i.e., the JPE based triggers) will be controlling since the thresholds for criterion #1 are lower than those of criterion #2. Thus, criterion #2 is in effect, but criterion #1 will always be triggered first.
3. The third criterion is based on two sorts of hatchery releases—the spring run surrogates and the hatchery winter run Chinook salmon. The first stage trigger is tripped when the cumulative loss for each release group is greater than 0.5%. There will be three spring run surrogate releases and one hatchery winter run Chinook salmon release this water year. The first spring run surrogate group was released on 12/18 and surrogates from this release have already been observed at the fish facilities. The other two spring run surrogate groups and the hatchery winter run Chinook salmon group have not been released yet.
4. The fourth criterion is based on the daily wild steelhead loss density. The first stage trigger is tripped when the steelhead loss density is greater than 8 fish/TAF and the second stage trigger is tripped when the steelhead loss density is greater than 12 fish/TAF.

The different criteria described above are what DOSS is currently monitoring. At the time of the DOSS call, no wild older juvenile Chinook were salvaged on 1/1. Therefore, DOSS did not provide any advice about OMR beyond the -5,000 cfs threshold that is required in NMFS RPA Action IV.2.3. However, DOSS did provide a recommendation to NMFS and WOMT to use the preliminary JPE for the loss density triggers in NMFS RPA Action IV.2.3 until a final JPE is available. Afterwards, NMFS determined that it

would proceed to implement NMFS RPA Action IV.2.3 using the preliminary JPE loss density triggers of 5.35 fish/TAF and 10.71 fish/TAF until the final JPE is available.

DOSS notes from 1/2 will be posted at <http://www.swr.noaa.gov/ocap/doss.htm>.

### **Operations**

<b>Preliminary Summary for 1/3/12</b>			
<b>SWP</b>		<b>CVP</b>	
Clifton Court Inflow (cfs)	3,000	Jones Pumping Plant (cfs)	2,800
SWP San Luis Reservoir Share (TAF) as of Midnight	424	CVP San Luis Reservoir Share (TAF) as of Midnight	683
San Luis Reservoir Total (TAF) as of Midnight	1,107	American – Nimbus Reservoir Releases (cfs)	5,000
Feather – Oroville Reservoir Releases (cfs)	1,750	Sacramento – Keswick Reservoir Releases (cfs)	4,500
<b>DELTA OPERATIONS</b>			
Outflow	~35,400	14-day average of Old and Middle River Flow as of 1/2/13 (cfs)	-950
X2 (km)	57	5-day average of Old and Middle River Flow as of 1/2/13 cfs	-660
E/I (%)	7.6 (14-day average)		

There was a question on why exports were not expected to increase tomorrow when the 14-day OMR is more positive than what is required under the 12/31 FWS determination. Loi Tran (DWR) will follow up on this question and provide an update after the DAT call.

A summary of daily operations can also be viewed at <http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/docs/delta/deltaops.pdf>.

**Next Conference Call:** The next DAT call is scheduled on 1/10 at 11:00 a.m.